

DDA 87-0778X  
14 April 1987

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Classification Review Division, DA

STAT FROM:   
Executive Assistant to the DDA

SUBJECT: NARA Request to Downgrade Top Secret Documents

Stan

I discussed your memorandum with Bill Donnelly concerning a review of Agency Top Secret documents which are subject to downgrading to Secret by NARA. Bill's reaction was that he could not see any good reason that we would oppose the downgrading of 30 year old documents so long as they remained classified. His recommendation was that we simply let NARA automatically downgrade them.

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ORIG: EXA/DDA:

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**Page Denied**

6 March 1987

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MEMORANDUM FOR: EA/DDA  
AC, ☐ IMS/DO  
IRO/DI  
C/IRMD

FROM: Chief, Classification Review Division

SUBJECT: Request by NARA to Downgrade 30 year old and older TOP SECRET documents.

1. NARA has requested our help to downgrade about 4,000 TOP SECRET documents of CIA interest held at NARA that are over 30 years old and NARA explains that by ISOO regulation each year agencies must inventory TOP SECRET documents by looking at ten percent of them to insure that they are accounted for. In addition, TOP SECRET material requires special care in handling which puts more work on NARA. To alleviate this situation NARA has suggested that we might be able to downgrade the documents based on a listing which they have sent us. In any case, NARA has stated that if they don't hear from us in thirty days (by 26 March 1987) they will assume we have no objection to their proceeding to downgrade the listed documents to SECRET. For further details see the attached memo for the Director of Information Services dated 16 January 1987 and the NARA letter dated 26 February 1987.)

2. CRD believes that the basis for our reply should be that:

- a. We ought to be as accommodating to NARA as we reasonably can be because they do a great deal for us;
- b. We automatically downgraded TOP SECRET WWII records, but we have never done it for post WWII records; and, given our position of requiring CIA review of all post WWII records for change in classification, this would set a precedent;
- c. The fact that these documents are all over 30 years old means that the great majority probably can be downgraded in consonance with security classification definitions;

3. We have spot checked some of the documents in the NARA listing against TSCADS but found none of them. The documents at NARA are dated 1944-54 while TSCADS dates back to the late 1940's. Also, the NARA listing does not provide a TOP SECRET number, for most of the documents, which is used to check TSCADS. We plan on getting a printout from DARE of TOP SECRET documents that were reviewed during the Agency's Systematic Classification Review program but we do not expect a great number will be identifiable with the NARA listing.

4. CRD proposes three options:

- a. Deny the NARA request and leave the situation as it is.
- b. Agree to the proposal and let NARA automatically downgrade all the documents except those that involve a foreign liaison service.
- c. Agree to visit NARA offices to gradually go through the documents to downgrade them. (We estimate that a two-man team could downgrade about 200 documents a day which would take about 20 days of such visits to complete this job. Because of other work requirements in CRD, this would be spread over a 2 - 3 month period.)

5. Other options might be available to us and addressee suggestions, or comments on the above proposals, are solicited. CRD, which regularly sends one reviewer to NARA one day each week to conduct classification review, would be willing to undertake this task as outlined in paragraph 4c above.

6. Addressees are requested to reply by Friday, March 20th, because of the deadline imposed by NARA. If this time is too limiting, we can call NARA and move it back. Please advise if you want more time.

  
C/CRD

Attachments: Memo to DIS  
NARA letter  
Explanation of index headings  
Sample page of index

Distribution:

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            1 - C/CRD file Liaison with NARA  
            1 - CRD Chrono



Washington, DC 20408

February 26, 1987

STAT

[Redacted]  
Director, Information Services  
Directorate for Administration  
1206 Ames Building  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Washington, DC 20505

STAT

Dear [Redacted]

The National Archives and Records Administration's Records Declassification Division has withheld from public access approximately one million pages of Federal records determined under current guidelines as still containing sensitive national security information even though the information is more than thirty years old. Among these classified pages are about 350,000 pages still marked TOP SECRET. Absent any downgrading instructions from the originating agencies such as yours, these documents are being provided the costly required level of safeguarding, accountability and control.

It has been our experience that whenever thirty-and-more-year-old-documents have been subjected to declassification review in response to Freedom of Information Act or mandatory review requests, the documents submitted have been downgraded when not declassified in whole or in part. Consequently we believe it is possible to downgrade all TOP SECRET documents which are more than thirty years old to the SECRET level without endangering the nation's security. We also believe that such a step should be taken to enhance the credibility of the government's information security program now burdened with this vast quantity of obsoletely marked TOP SECRET documents.

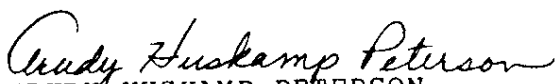
Enclosed is a listing of each document which is under your classification jurisdiction and which (under your declassification guidelines) has been identified and withdrawn as containing national security classified information and is marked as requiring TOP SECRET protection. Accompanying the listing is a note to assist you in interpreting it. The documents listed are available for your examination in the National Archives Building at 8th and Pennsylvania Avenue, NW or the Washington National Records Center in Suitland, Maryland. Please contact Edwin A. Thompson, Director of the Records Declassification Division, to arrange for an examination of your TOP SECRET information. He can be reached by telephone at 523-3165.

2.

Should you conclude from your examination of this listing that any or all of the documents contained on it may be downgraded insofar as your agency's interests are concerned, please endorse the copy of this letter (enclosed) and return it in the envelope provided. If I do not hear from you in thirty days, I will assume that you have no objection to our proceeding to downgrade the listed documents to the SECRET level of classification.

If you have any further questions concerning this matter, please contact Mr. Thompson.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Trudy Huskamp Peterson".

TRUDY HUSKAMP PETERSON  
Assistant Archivist  
for the National Archives

Enclosures (4)

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION  
RECORDS DECLASSIFICATION DIVISION

An explanation of headings appearing in "Report of TOP SECRET Documents, List of Selected Items."

**PROJECT NUMBER** A unique number assigned for control purposes by the Records Declassification Division to a body of records undergoing declassification review.

**RG "Record Group"** A body of organizationally related records established by NARA on the basis of provenance with particular regard for the administrative history, the complexity and the value of the records and archives of the institution or organization involved.

**ENTRY** The number assigned to a file series in an inventory or other finding aid or description of a record group.

**BOX #** Number assigned to a container, usually an archives box or similar storage container for archives or manuscripts, of pressed cardboard, either in letter or legal size, and usually with a capacity of about one-third cubic foot.

**TAB #** Sequential number assigned by the records declassification review staff to each document or sequence of documents identified as potentially containing national security information. The item (or items) are enclosed between two pieces of paper marked with the tab number to readily identify the identified material within a folder or box.

**FOLDER TITLE/DESCRIPTION** The title assigned by the originator of the file to describe its contents. **DESCR:** An unclassified brief description of the tabbed material, usually a single item, identifying the type of document, addressees or similar information sufficient to distinguish it from other material.

**DOC DATE** The date of the document described: DAY, MONTH, YEAR.

**CLA** The original classification marking appearing on the described item (T=Top Secret) followed by a slash (/) to show any authorized downgrading. Items on this list will show T or Top Secret after the slash in this column.

**AGCY** The abbreviation used by NARA to identify the agency which originated or has primary declassification jurisdiction over the described item.



2.

**REASON** An abbreviated characterization of the general nature of the sensitive information which may require continued protection in the interest of national security (e.g., "INTEL" indicates that the described item contains intelligence information).

**FOREIGN** A three-letter-code used to identify the foreign country or international organization which may have originated the information identified as potentially sensitive.

**SPECIAL MARKINGS** Used only when Restricted Data (RD), Formerly Restricted Data (FRD) or Codeword information is marked on the described item.

**COPIES** How many copies or versions of the same described item were placed under the same tab.

**PGS** How many pages of material were placed under the same tab.

**COORD** Used to indicate whether the described item has been reviewed ("coordinated") by an agency declassification specialist. "N" indicates no agency review, a blank indicates that an agency has reviewed the item, and "S" indicates the agency released a sanitized version of the item.

**ACTION YEAR** The date, usually 10 years following initial review and identification, when the described items should be rereviewed in accordance with EO 12065. This requirement is no longer in effect under EO 12356. This space is also used, however, to indicate the year sanitizing instructions were received or the date, usually 30 years after creation, when a document can be automatically released.

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16 January 1987

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Information Services

FROM: Chief, Classification Review Division

SUBJECT: Downgrading Proposal to Come from NARA

1. Mr. Alan Thompson, Chief of the Declassification Division at NARA, called today to alert us to a coming proposal for downgrading TOP SECRET documents currently held at NARA. The IS00 requires that every year agencies inventory top secret documents by looking at 10% of them to insure they are accounted for. NARA is looking for a way to ease this burden and to do that is requesting that appropriate agencies grant NARA approval to downgrade TOP SECRET material that is 30 years old or older.

2. NARA currently has 350,000 pages of TOP SECRET material over 30 years old. The computer listing of these documents runs to over 200 pages. The documents are located in State and Military files in the main NARA building and Suitland but Mr. Thompson estimates that at least a third or more is CIA originated and therefore of interest to us.

3. Mr. Thompson is preparing a letter for the concerned agencies including CIA, which will request approval to automatically downgrade TOP SECRET documents over 30 years old to SECRET. The agencies will be welcome to look at the material or survey it in any way they wish as NARA knows where "every page is located." The listing will provide titles and non-classified identification data on each document which will provide us with an idea of what type of information is involved. According to Mr. Thompson the letter should reach CIA in about two weeks.

4. A second subject discussed briefly was the status of the DARE computer data base as a permanent record. After the discussion Mr. Thompson concluded that the DARE data base would not be a record that NARA should assension because:

- 1) by the time CIA would release it to NARA it will be out of date;
- 2) many of the decisions reflected in DARE will be altered by later declassification review decisions such as those taken during the Historical Review Program (HRP); and

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- 3) actions taken during the Systematic Classification Review Program (SCRIP), which are recorded in DARE, are ignored during the HRP because we are sanitizing documents in the HRP and did not sanitize in the SCRIP.



Chief, Classification Review Division

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PROJECT NUMBER: 750114

LIST OF SELECTED ITEMS

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RG	ENTRY	BOX #	TAB #	FOLDER TITLE/DESCRIPTION	DOC DATE DA MO YR	CLA	AGCY	REASON	FOREIGN	SPECIAL MARKINGS	COPIES	PGS	COORD	ACTION YEAR
331	199	43	1	DESCR: Appendix A to 2nd Army Periodical Counter-Intelligence Report #1 in Bayeux	00/06/44	T/T	CIA	OSS			1	1		1989
											SER #:	SA/358/1/GI's		
331	199	43	2	DESCR: "Information obt frm M506 Generalmajor, Luftlande Division": Rpt.	26/04/44	T/T	CIA	INTEL	GBR		1	4		1989
											SER #:	GRGG 136		
331	199	106	1	DESCR: Memo, Chief, X-2, OSS Miss. to All X-2+SCI Off. "X-2 Functions in Germany"	07/06/45	T/T	CIA	OSS			1	3		1989
331	199	106	2	DESCR: Ltr., Brig. Gen. Sibert to Col. Kehn	22/05/45	T/T	CIA	OSS			1	1		1989
331	199	106	3	DESCR: Ltr., CIC-Special Agent to HQ-CIC subj: Prelin. Interrogation of Subject	18/05/45	T/T	CIA	OSS			1	5		1989
331	199	106	4	DESCR: Sum., Weismiller to "Controlled Enemy Agents w/t Cases in France"	00/04/45	T/T	CIA	OSS			1	7		1989
											SER #:	#23		
331	199	106	5	DESCR: Memo, Wilkinson to SHAEF "Disposal of Captured Enemy Agents"	11/04/45	T/T	CIA	OSS			1	3		1989
											SER #:	#104/320/94		
331	199	106	6	DESCR: Memo, Lee to AC of S, G-2 "Agrmt. Gov. Oper. of Dbl. Agts. by Belg. Auth."	03/03/45	T/T	CIA	OSS			1	5		1989
											SER #:	#370 (G-2)		
331	199	106	8	DESCR: Memo, "Employment of Short-term Espionage Agents"	23/06/44	T/T	CIA	OSS			1	1		1989
											SER #:	2/AGp/INT/2034		
331	199	109	2	DESCR: Memo, Smith to Commanding General "Cover and Deception"	31/08/44	T/T	CIA	OSS			2	4		1989
											SER #:	GBI/CI/370-2		